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RURAL AREAS
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NEWSLETTER

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JOB CORPSMEN BUILD THEIR FUTURES

Mention the name Ronald Santos, and the staff of the Mountainair, New Mexico, Job Corps Conservation Center glows with pride.

The 18-year-old Corpsman from Boston, Massachusetts was one of the first of about 150 young men to be assigned to the Center to get needed work experience and to improve their educations.

During the six months Santos was at the Center, he went from the fifth to the eighth grade level in classwork. Working under Head Cook Thomas Ferris, a retired Marine Corps master sergeant, Santos also learned basic kitchen skills. "Near the end of his six months here, he could run the kitchen. All he needed was the menu for the day," Ferris said.



Santos is now at a Job Corps Urban Center getting advanced training in cooking and baking. About 57 Mountainair Corpsmen have gone on to Urban Centers where they receive advanced training in trades and skills.

Twenty-three other Corpsmen improved themselves to the point that they could hold regular jobs, or they returned to school on their own. For example, Ronald Easton, a 19-year-old from Salem, Oregon, learned to operate heavy road equipment and improved his education from the seventh to the tenth grade level in his five months at the Center. He's back home now as a part-time diesel mechanic and part-time student.

"These young men benefit from the program, whether they 'graduate' or not," says Center Director William Snyder. "The real success story for most of the Corpsmen is seeing this as a chance to do something for themselves and then working at it very hard."



Nationally, about 11,354 young men are Job Corpsmen at 81 Conservation Centers operated by the U. S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior and State agencies.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE ENDS 16 YEAR INDUSTRIAL DROUGHT

Gilmer County, West Virginia, soon will have its first plant in 16 years. The last plant, a glass company, closed in 1950.

Local people raised \$55,400 to help finance the new industry which will make plastic pipe and fittings. The Kanawha Union Bank of Glenville, the Small Business Administration, and the West Virginia Industrial Development Association loaned the balance of the \$650,000 needed to build the plant.

Mr. Billy B. Burke, president of the Gilmer County Industrial Development Association, which directed the fund drive, said, "The magnitude of the local effort is indicated by the fact that Gilmer County has a population of only 8,050 and 54 percent of the families have an annual income of less than \$3,000. This worthwhile project has become a reality through the combined effort and some financial sacrifice on the part of many individuals."

The new company, Four D Manufacturing, employing 50 people will make thermoplastic pipe and fittings. The State Road Commission built an access road to the plant site and the local work unit conservationist of USDA's Soil Conservation Service designed a 3-acre pond to provide water to cool the plastic pipe during the manufacturing process.

KANSAS COMMUNITY TO BUILD \$1 MILLION MEAT PACKING PLANT

How does a rural community build a \$1,209,487 packing plant?

In Mankato, Kansas, the job took five years and the cooperation of just about every one of the county's 7,000 citizens.

But it was worth it. Construction will start soon on a building to house the new packing company. Local leaders hope the new plant will have a "snowballing" effect on the area's economy. In addition to providing jobs for 75 people, the plant will help improve cattle marketing and feeding operations in the area.



Local businessmen and merchants, the City Council, the County Commissioners, school officials, county organizations and groups, the area's livestock producers, and local USDA field personnel worked together long hard hours to get the plant going. For example, the county commissioners are building an all weather road to the plant. The city will expand water and sewer lines. USDA's Agricultural Research Service made a study which showed a good supply of livestock in 38 Kansas and 47 Nebraska counties (within 150 miles of Mankato) to support the plant. The plant will slaughter about 100,800 head per year. Principal marketing outlets will be Eastern cities and a local grocery chain.

Financing came from several sources. Jewell-Mitchell Cooperative Electric Company, Inc., borrowed \$324,487 from USDA's Rural Electrification Administration for relending to finance electrical wiring and equipment for the new plant. The Small Business Administration loaned \$700,000, and the Kansas Development Credit Corporation provided \$35,000. The rest of the capital for the project was raised locally.

The project is the result of local people working together, and they're still at it. Now they are working on plans for a new hospital and school. A recent \$180,000 loan from USDA's Farmers Home Administration will help build a 20 unit senior citizen rental housing project in the town.

1966 YOUTH OPPORTUNITY CAMPAIGN

Almost two million young people (16 through 21) will be looking for jobs this summer. Some will need temporary work so that they can continue their education; others will be looking for permanent jobs.

President Johnson has urged private employers, unions, churches, clubs, state and local governments to join the 1966 Youth Opportunity Campaign by providing extra summer jobs and training experiences.

Local offices of your State Employment Service are helping. They are developing Youth Opportunity registers that list young people who need jobs.

RAD committees can help by encouraging young people to sign up at the nearest State Employment Service office and by encouraging employers to hire summer trainees.



COOPERATIVE SPELLS HOPE FOR 500 TENNESSEE FAMILIES

For 500 low-income rural families in Hardeman, Fayette, and Haywood Counties, Tennessee, the Mid-South Consumers Oil Cooperative is more than just a way to improve their incomes. It offers a new way of life.

Most of the members are tenants and sharecroppers. The majority operate farms of 3 to 60 acres and have incomes of less than \$4,000 per year.

Before the cooperative got started, every time their farm equipment broke down or they needed fuel, they had to hire someone to drive them into town to get it. This slowed plantings and took money needed to meet living expenses. Now the cooperative makes on-the-spot delivery of parts and fuel.

A retired county agricultural agent and the Tennessee representative of the National Sharecropper Fund worked with local farmers to get the cooperative started in 1964. By selling \$50 shares to about 250 families (the rest bought shares at about \$1 per week) the co-op raised enough capital to make home delivery of parts (tires, tubes, batteries, etc.) last year. Then in September, 1965, a \$49,000 economic opportunity loan through USDA's Farmers Home Administration allowed the cooperative to start delivery of needed gasoline and fuel oil. The loan also helped members buy farm storage tanks.



Now, the cooperative plans to help members get a contract for growing truck crops and to truck their vegetables to processing plants as far as 60 miles away.

The cooperative is doing more than just helping its members raise their incomes. For the first time, they are meeting together, helping each other solve problems, and looking for new ways to improve their farming methods.

RAD PUBLICATION REVISED

USDA's publication featuring examples and pictures of RAD activities throughout the Nation--Rural Areas Development At Work--has been up-dated. If your committee is looking for ideas which worked for other development committees, you'll want to see a copy. For a free copy of PA-625 send a post card to: Editor, RAD Newsletter, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 20250.

SELF-HELP RURAL HOUSING IDEA WORKS IN NINE STATES, PUERTO RICO

Low-income families in 9 States and Puerto Rico are stretching their housing dollars with a unique self-help idea. They are supplying most of the labor and USDA's Farmers Home Administration (FHA) is providing the credit.

The States are California, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Texas.



"Key factors strengthening this rural housing program are FHA supervision and credit along with exchange of labor by participating families," Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman said. "A construction supervisor--who works with the families--has been hired by FHA in some cases, while in others, the construction supervisor has been paid by a nonprofit organization with Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) funds."

In California's Tulare and King counties, 20 homes were built and 18 are under construction. With the help of an OEO grant, Self-Help Enterprises, a nonprofit group, hired construction supervisors. The average FHA loan was about \$6,600. The homes are worth from \$8,000 to \$9,000.

Near Bridgeton, New Jersey, 6 homes were built with \$6,500 loans and are valued between \$9,000 and \$10,000. Eight more will be built soon.

In Bexar County, Texas, about 12 miles from San Antonio, a retired Army colonel and a priest are helping low-income people build homes with salvage material. The average loan is less than \$1,800. Two homes are completed, 5 are under construction, and eventually, 30 to 35 houses will be built. The average value is close to \$6,500.

FARM VACATION LIST AVAILABLE

Farm vacations are fun and they don't cost much. In addition, they add to farm income and help boost the economy of rural communities.

Your subcommittee on recreation and tourism might want to investigate the idea of forming a regional cooperative association whose members take paying guests.

If you'd like the list of organizations and agencies known to provide information on vacation farms, write: Editor, RAD Newsletter, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 20250. Ask for VACATION FARMS.

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